



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF CHAPLAINS
WASHINGTON, DC

23 July 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL COMMANDERS

FROM: HQ USAF/HC
112 Luke Ave, Ste 319
Bolling AFB, DC 20032-9050


SUBJECT: Islamic Observance of Ramadan and Eid-UI-Fitr

I want to thank you for your continued support of our Muslim personnel who will observe Ramadan (Holy Month of Fasting) during August and September. Ramadan begins 22 August 2009 and is observed for the next 29 days. During Ramadan, a Muslim must fast each day from dawn (approximately a hour and a half before sunrise) until after sunset. During these hours, a Muslim cannot consume any food or liquids. Ramadan is followed by the Eid-UI-Fitr, one of the two major Muslim holidays. Eid-UI-Fitr falls on 20 September 2009.

Some accommodations may need to be made for Muslim members to allow them to observe these religious requirements. Muslims may request release from duty each day before sunset in order to make the necessary preparations for observance of the Iftar (fast breaking meal) and for the sunset prayer. Additionally, Muslims may request exemption for participation in rigorous daily physical training and field training exercises.

Deployed commanders should be sensitive to the needs of their Muslim personnel during Ramadan. Commanders deployed in predominately Muslim cultures should also consider asking Airmen to limit eating and drinking in public as a demonstration of respect to our host nations.

I encourage you to approve religious accommodation requests while continuing to nurture an environment in your unit where such requests are welcomed. Your Air Force Chaplain Corps stands ready to assist and advise you as needed.


CECIL R. RICHARDSON
Chaplain, Major General, USAF
Chief of Chaplains